	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 5: General Case Management	**Effective Date:** May 1, 2008
	Section 2: Gathering Case Information	**Version:** 1

POLICY	OLD POLICY: N/A

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) will gather as much information as possible about the child and the family to assist in completing a thorough assessment of the functional strengths and underlying needs of the family. This information will be used in developing the case plan and establishing IV-E eligibility. See separate policies, 5.8 Developing the Case Plan and the Family Functional Assessment Field Guide for suggested questions in each functional area.

Code References
1. N/A

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM) will:
1. Collect at least the following information:
    a. Child abuse/neglect (CA/N) Intake Report (310),
    b. Assessment Report (311),
    c. Safety Assessment,
    d. Risk Assessment,
    e. Strengths and Needs Assessment,
    f. Assessment (investigation) notes, photographs, and recordings,
    g. Educational information,
    h. Medical Passport,
    i. Family Network Diagram (see Chapter 12, Family Network Diagram Instruction Guide),
    j. Mental Health Screen (see separate policy, 5.11 Mental Health Services),
    k. IV-E and IV-EA eligibility, and
    l. Provider reports.

2. Record all pertinent contacts pertaining to assessment in Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS);
3. Analyze all information as it pertains to safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren);
4. Provide a summary of all pertinent information to the Child and Family Team (CFT), for the purpose of developing an appropriate case plan to meet the needs of the child/family; and
5. Provide relevant information to service providers on the Service Referral Form.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

1. N/A

FORMS AND TOOLS

1. Family Network Diagram Instruction Guide
2. Family Functional Assessment Field Guide – Available in ICWIS
3. Mental Health Screening Tool – Available in ICWIS
4. Service Referral Form

RELATED INFORMATION

Family Network Diagram
This tool combines the Ecomap and Genogram to provide valuable information on genealogy and community resources available to the family. The use of this tool recognizes the family as the most knowledgeable source of information.   See chapter 12, Family Network Diagram Instruction Guide for more information.

Areas of Assessment
Assessment is an ongoing process that happens at every interaction point with the family. Throughout the life of the case, the FCM will strive to assess the functional strengths and underlying needs for each family member in the following areas:
1. Safety,
2. Well-being,
3. Domestic violence,
4. Sexual abuse,
5. Living conditions,
6. Financial aspects/employment,
7. Education,
8. Formal and informal supports available to caregivers,
9. Resources available to the family,
10. Interaction between caregivers and child(ren),
11. Academic or developmental level of the child and the parent/guardian/custodian,
12. Relationship between adult caregivers,
13. Recent losses,
14. Any apparent family physical or mental health issues,
15. Substance abuse challenges,
16. Stability and transitions, and
17. Permanence.

Functional Strengths
The depth of an individual and family's capacity that enables them to endure and cope with difficult situations, to bounce back in the face of significant trauma, the ability to use external challenges as a stimulus for growth, to excel despite the barriers they may be presented, and the use of social supports, family rituals and traditions, as a source of resilience.[1]

Underlying Needs
These are the underlying needs in the family that prevent the children from being safe. The family's beliefs, values and knowledge that leads to behaviors that are either protective or not. Family, with help and support from the team, identify the needs, issues, obstacles, barriers, or problems to address in order to achieve safety, permanency, and well-being for the children. The first meeting includes an honest and complete disclosure by the team of all the identified needs with the understanding that, over time, subsequent CFT meetings will address each of the needs, according to the priority established by the team.

---

[1] Adapted from McQuaide and Ehreneich, 1997